

swung through north at noon, and dying down in the northwest in the afternoon.

The conspicuous white rump and long tail (the fork is not always discernible) separates this species in the field from the heavier and short-tailed Spine-tailed Swift, which has not yet been satisfactorily identified in this State.

—G. M. STORR, Floreat Park, and G. M. DUNNET, Nedlands.

Occurrences of the Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*).—

This tern is regarded as being rare in Western Australia. Serventy and Whittell (*Handbook of Birds of Western Australia*, 2nd ed., p. 128) say "This is one of the fresh-water terns, but may occur also on estuaries and sea-coasts. It appears to be quite rare in Western Australia and has never been reported in the South-west." The following occurrences seem worth putting on record.

Carnarvon. July 8, 1952. Two Gull-billed Terns were seen near the Railway Bridge. As this was my first acquaintance with the bird I passed them by at first as Crested Terns until their habit of hawking for food over the sandy beach and mud flats drew my attention. Then the short, strong, black beak and all black head served to identify them.

Carnarvon. September 27, 1953. Two black-headed and five grey-headed birds, with black around the eye, were seen hawking over the sand in the same place as the previous year. The following calls were heard. First a single-noted shrill call. The black-headed birds also gave a harsh call reminiscent of that of the Roseate Tern. The grey-headed birds appeared to be soliciting the black-headed for food so giving the impression they were young birds. The whole party rose from the sand and, uttering harsh alarm rattles, attacked a Red-backed Sea Eagle.

Carnarvon. October 24, 1952. Four Gull-billed Terns were seen in the same spot as in previous years. Only one had a black cap. Again the harsh chatter and shrill single call were heard. The birds were hawking for food over the sand near the water's edge.

Morawa, August 16, 1953. Six Gull-billed Terns were seen flying over a fresh-water lake about two miles west of the town. All had black heads with no white showing on the forehead. The harsh chattering call was again heard. Later in the same day another party of 18 birds was seen.

It would seem the birds are in much the same category as the Banded Stilts, moving over the country to sites where food is plentiful and nesting in much the same fashion as the Stilt. Serventy and Whittell give only one nesting record for Western Australia and, owing to the rarity of the birds, nesting sites are likely to be found by accident rather than design.

—VINCENT SERVenty, Subiaco.

Pellet Production in *Corvus*.—The regurgitation of the indigestible materials swallowed in the food of eagles, hawks, and owls in the form of coherent pellets has been well studied. Though pellets are known to be produced by members of several other